

AUSTRALIAN METHODIST THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION AND THEOLOGIANs

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This article has been peer reviewed

This article describes the development of Australian Methodist theological education from the nineteenth century until the formation of the Uniting Church in 1977. It supplements and complements an earlier article by Norman Young in this journal on Methodist ministerial education in the Victoria and Tasmania Conference. Significant Australian Methodist theologians are also discussed and their contributions to Methodist and ecumenical intellectual life are described. It asserts that Australian Methodist theological endeavour was one of steady educational betterment and public influence.

In the early nineteenth century the ministers of the various Methodist denominations came from England, having received their ministerial education there. When Australian-born ministers began to be ordained, their education was primarily as probationary ministers working in circuits under the direction of a superintendent minister, sometimes supplemented with instruction in secular subjects at a secondary school. Australian Methodists simply lacked resources to secure adequate training for home-grown candidates to the ministry. By 1861 the Wesleyan Methodist Conference in Australia was determined to provide theological education at tertiary level for its ministerial candidates, maintaining that since these had ‘expressed a desire to spend some time at a theological college...let us follow in the footsteps of the parent church in England’,¹ which

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ran a number of seminary-style theological colleges. But an appeal to finance a comparable (Australia-wide) institution failed and this proposal was abandoned. All that could be done was to outline a 'course of study' and list of books suitable to absorb should anyone seek acceptance into the ordained ministry.²

I. Early Training Efforts

The reliance upon Local Preachers among Methodists is legendary, but until the post-war period no one expected uniform examinations for their accreditation; they simply arose out of the acceptance and sponsorship of local congregations and their class meetings.³ Since Methodism never expanded in Australia to become the second-most populous Protestant denomination as it did in the United States, or possessed resources for anything like a Duke University (founded 1889), its leadership was in a disadvantaged position to cultivate clerical scholarship.⁴ Apart from being disunited until 1902, Methodists lacked the services of an overseas powerhouse of erudition like the University of Edinburgh Faculty of Divinity offered for the Presbyterians (who were admittedly torn by their own serious divisiveness until 1901).⁵ Theological Halls for training Presbyterian clergy at Ormond and St Andrew's Colleges, established at the Universities of Melbourne (1865) and Sydney (1873) respectively, and the Congregationalists' Camden College (Sydney, 1864), were displaying their credentials a generation or two

¹ Quoted in the *Wesleyan Chronicle*, 1861. See also, for example, Irving C. Benson, *A Century of Victorian Methodism* (Melbourne: Spectator, 1935), 276–9; Don Wright and Eric G. Clancy, *The Methodists: A History of Methodism in New South Wales* (Sydney: Allen and Unwin, 1993), 40–42.

² Australasian Wesleyan Methodist Church, *Minutes of Conference* (1861); cf. *Sydney Morning Herald* (9 February 1861), 3. Apart from Wesley's writings, such books as J. Fletcher's (Five) *Checks to Antinomianism* and R. Watson's *Theological Institutes* were recommended, officially listed in C.W. Rigg, *A Digest of the Laws and Regulations of the Australasian Wesleyan Connexion* (Auckland: Stephen Rabone, 1872), 144–45.

³ See G.S. Udy, *Key to Change* (Sydney: Donald Pettigrew, 1962), chs 5–6.

⁴ Cf. K.S. Latourette, *A History of the Expansion of Christianity*, vol. 5: *The Great Century: The Americas, Australasia, and Africa, 1800 A.D. to 1914 A.D.* (New York: Harper, 1943), 142–48, 153–55; cf. the estimate of sociologists R.N. Bellah et al., *The Good Society* (New York: Vintage, 1992), 182–3 that the United Methodist Church was the single biggest Protestant denomination in the USA from 1844 to 1890.

⁵ This is not to overlook the earlier Methodist Theological Colleges in England, as at Manchester, Headingly (Leeds), Handsworth (Birmingham), etc.

before comparable Methodist institutions.⁶ Even though there were preliminary ‘theological institutions,’ properly provided programmes of theological tertiary education were not offered by the Methodists until after the turn of the twentieth century, the earliest at Queen’s College (University of Melbourne) by 1900, then at King’s College (University of Queensland) and the autonomous Leigh College (Sydney) from 1913 and 1918 respectively, and in later jumps at Wesley College (Adelaide) in 1927, and Barclay Theological College (Perth) in 1951.⁷ Even then, well into the second half of the twentieth century, most better-accredited candidates for the ministry did not come to possess university degrees, but only Licentiates in Theology (LTh);⁸ and many were not trained in theological colleges at all but in less demanding institutions (the Brighton Methodist Training Home, Adelaide; Otira Methodist Mission College, Kew, Melbourne; and the Sydney Missionary and Bible College, etc.) because they had not completed final-year schooling.⁹ Those in the latter centres commonly kept up the legendary view, held earlier among many non-mainstream preachers (Primitives, Free Churchers), that there was only one book

⁶ D. Chambers, *Theological Teaching and Thought in the Theological Hall of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria, 1865–1906* (Melbourne: Theological Hall, Ormond College, 1967); C.A. White, *The Challenge of the Years: A History of the Presbyterian Church of Australia in the State of New South Wales* (London: Angus & Robertson, 1951), 196–202; J. Garrett and L.W. Farr, *Camden College: a Centenary History* (Sydney: Camden College, 1964), 6–16. Cf. also K.J. Cable, ‘Presbyterian Secondary Education in New South Wales in the Nineteenth Century’, [National Library of Australia] MS 2835).

⁷ Wright and Clancy, *The Methodists*, 41–2; C.J. Prescott, ‘The Evolution of Leigh College’, *Journal of the Australasian Methodist Historical Society* vol. 49 (1946): 680–82; E.H. Sugden, *The History of Queen’s College within the University of Melbourne*, ed. A. Wyvern ([Melbourne: Queen’s College, 1952?]), [rare], esp. 45–60; [Publications Committee], *Annals of King’s College, Affiliated with the University of Queensland, Silver Jubilee, 1913–1938* (Brisbane: King’s College, 1938); A.D. Hunt, ed., *Number 20: A Pictorial History of Theological Education at No. 20, King William Road* (Adelaide: Uniting Church of South Australia Historical Society, 1980).

⁸ General background, A. Cooper, ‘Ministry in the 18th and 19th Centuries’, in *Ministry in the Australian Churches*, ed. William Tabbernee (Melbourne: Joint Board of Christian Education, 1987), 49–56; Ian Breward, *A History of the Churches in Australasia* (Oxford: Oxford, 2001), 138–9; A. Somerville, ‘The Training of the Methodist Ministry in New South Wales, 1919–1939’, MA thesis, Macquarie University, Sydney, 1982.

⁹ For leading figures involved, see, for example, P.M.T. Tilbrook, *The Life and Times of Dr. William George Torr*, Reverend Gordon Rowe Memorial Lecture (Adelaide: South Australian Methodist Historical Society, 1972), 13–16 (Brighton); I.F. McLaren, ‘Thomas Craike Rentoul (Rintoul), 1882–1945’, *Australian Dictionary of Biography* (hereafter *ADB*) (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1988), 11: 365 (Otira).

necessary to know for all the lessons of life – the Bible.¹⁰ Still, the Methodists were heavily committed to education, founding great schools, and worked hard disseminating literary knowledge through their famous Book Depots.¹¹

In Sydney the training of Methodist ministers began humbly as a subsidiary development of Newington College for boys (from 1863), ‘to promote the intellectual improvement of the junior preachers’, and out of this the Revs Joseph Horner Fletcher (1823–90) and Charles John Prescott (1857–1946), both learned in Methodist theology and governance, developed the Stanmore Wesleyan Theological Institution (from 1881).¹² A full-fledged Methodist Theological College – named ‘Leigh’, after Australian Methodism’s founder-figure, the Rev Samuel Leigh – started in 1915 in the inner Sydney suburb of Enfield. Its first Principal, the Rev William E. Bennett (1872–1949), was a ‘diligent scholar’ who combined Fijian language and mission study with New Testament commentary while administering the (Methodist) Theological College and High School in Suva.¹³ Leigh College was detached from a university setting because the New South Wales Methodists had not been ready to

¹⁰ For background on the founding Methodists as ‘men of one book’ (*homines unius libri*), still an honoured outlook, see B. Miller, *John Wesley: The World his Parish* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1943), 33. On Australia, see S. Piggin, ‘A History of Theological Education in Australia’, in *The Furtherance of Religious Beliefs: Essays on the History of Theological Education in Australia*, ed. G. Treloar, special issue of *Lucas* 19: 20, 1995–96 (Sydney: Centre for the Study of Australian Christianity, 1997): 24, 41 n. 2.

¹¹ On Methodist schools, see, for example, Benson, *Century of Victorian Methodism*, esp. 288–9; and see below. On depots, see, for example, Methodist Church of Australasia, New South Wales Conference, *100: Methodist Book Depot (NSW), 1858–1958* ([Sydney: Methodist NSW Conference, 1958]) (lasting under another name until 2000) (Oral Testimony [=OT hereafter]: John Oldmeadow, Sept. 2010); [Methodist Church, Victoria], *The Centenary of the Methodist Book Depot, 1859–1959* (Melbourne: Methodist Book Depot, 1959).

¹² Australasian Wesleyan Methodist Church, *Minutes of Conference* (1862) (quotation); cf. ‘R.G.P.’ ‘Leigh Has a History,’ *Vocatus* (Leigh College) (1956): 6–7; D.S. MacMillan, *Newington College 1863–1963* (Sydney: Newington, 1963), chs 1–2; and see J. H. Fletcher, *Sermons, Addresses and Essays* (Sydney: Wesleyan Book Depot, 1892); *The Second Century of Australian History and the Principles Most Likely to Influence it* (Melbourne: Mason, Firth & McCutcheon, 1888); C. J. Prescott, *Official Addresses* (Sydney: Epworth, 1912 [?]); *Matters for Methodists* ([Methodist] Book Depot, 1933); ‘Wesley and the Germans,’ *Journal and Proceedings of the Australasian Methodist Historical Society* 7 (pt. 1): 19 (1938): 311–18; P.L. Swain, *Charles John Prescott, Headmaster and Educationalist in New South Wales* (Sydney: Newington College, 1978).

¹³ Wright and Clancy, *Methodists*, 41–2; J. Garrett, *Footsteps in the Sea: Christianity in Oceania to World War II* (Geneva: WCC, 1992), 165–6.

follow other major churches in building a college at the University of Sydney, although it was only after the splendid (residential) Wesley College was built there (from 1917) that Leigh received its own impressive set of buildings at Enfield (from 1927).¹⁴ To the south, Victorian and Tasmanian ministers were early taught by the pioneering missionary to Fiji and son of the first Australian-born Methodist minister, John Watsford (1820–1907), at the so-called Affiliated College, Melbourne, before the establishment of Queen's College in 1888.¹⁵ In contrast to the New South Wales reactions, in Victoria the Wesleyan Methodist Church did accept a land grant (from the University of Melbourne) and agreed to build the residential College of Queen's on the condition that an integral part of its community would be theological students and teachers training them for ministry. Starting in a limited way, at least by 1890 students were fortunate enough to have access to Arts Faculty courses as part of their studies, and to experience life within a kind of microcosm of the whole society. This was 'a bold experiment', and 'had no parallel' in homeland Methodism.¹⁶ Queen's soon became Australasian Methodism's 'Central Theological Institution' (1897); additional personnel and the founding of the ecumenical Melbourne College of Divinity in 1910 made for a solid programme of studies, taught largely by the first Master of Queen's, E.H. Sugden, noted theologian, biblical scholar and editor. The first theological professor at Queen's was appointed a decade later.¹⁷

In Brisbane and Adelaide comparable achievements had to wait. Up until 1897, Queensland's candidates for the ministry were sent to Stanmore, and thereafter to Queen's until 1913, the Melbourne paradigm then being adopted for King's College (founded 1912, with 'affiliation' to the University of Queensland). In South Australia,

¹⁴ G. Hickson, 'Leigh College – A Brief History,' *Leigh: The Magazine of Leigh Theological College Enfield* vol. 1 (1950): 7–8; J.S. Udy, 'The Tortuous Pilgrimage towards Union,' *Uniting* (26 April 1985): 11.

¹⁵ J. Watsford, *Glorious Gospel Triumphs* (London: Charles H. Kelly, 1900); R. Howe, 'Watsford, John, 1820–1907,' *ADB* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1976), 6, 61; and see N. Young, 'Queen's and the Methodist Theological Institutions', in *The Master: The Life and Work of Edward H. Sugden*, ed. R. Howe (Melbourne: Uniting Academic Press, 2009), 45–51.

¹⁶ I. Breward, 'Historical Perspectives on Theological Education in Australasia', in *Furtherance of Religious Beliefs*, ed. Treloar, 13 (quotations); O. Parnaby, *Queen's College, University of Melbourne: A Centenary History* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1990), chs 1–2.

¹⁷ Methodist Church of Australasia, *Minutes of General Conference, 1900–11* (Box 1336A): 13–14; cf. Parnaby, *Queen's College*, 14.

although during the 1880s some Methodist school-leavers had access to the pioneering Union College experiment in Protestant ministerial training, the Brighton Training Home served most candidates (from 1901), with the best sent interstate to Queen's until higher-level teaching was achievable at the new Wesley Theological College in Wayville, Adelaide, in 1927. The model became like Sydney's, with Lincoln College, as a separate residential institution attached to the University of Adelaide, opened as late as 1952.¹⁸ In the West, at last, after heavy expenses in sending select ordinands to Queen's for two-year stints, along with 43 (broken) years of ministerial training by the Wesley College Theological Institution, South Perth (from 1927) and at the Barclay Theological Hall (from 1951), there arose Kingswood College, close to the University of Western Australia (from 1962). Kingswood definitely took inspiration (and some of its Masters) from Queen's.¹⁹ As for the Northern Territory, in 1973, and thus just four years before the Uniting Church in Australia was born, the Methodist Overseas Mission cooperated in setting up The Joint Training Centre (later Nungalinya College), Darwin, to educate Aboriginal and Torres Strait adults 'for ministry and service'. Nungalinya strictly lies outside our scope of reference, though, because Northern Territory Methodists had already joined the United Church of North Australia (from 1946).²⁰

II. Sugden and Queen's College

By the turn of the twentieth century, Queen's College was pivotal for Methodist theological education and was especially noted for

¹⁸ On Brisbane, see esp. *Annals of King's College* (1938); T. Faragher, *Men and Masters: A Centenary of King's College within the University of Queensland* (Brisbane: King's College, 2012), 1–2, 10–12. On Adelaide, see W. Phillips, 'Union College Adelaide, 1872–1886: A Brief Experiment in United Theological Education', in *Furtherance of Religious Beliefs*, ed. Treloar, p. 65; *The Register* (Adelaide), 7 June 1909 (Brighton being alleged there to be 'the first of its kind in Australia.'). Arnold D. Hunt, *This Side of Heaven: A History of Methodism in South Australia* (Adelaide: Lutheran Publishing House, 1985), 258–9, 337–40; C. Shearer, *Lincoln College, The First Twenty-Five Years* (Adelaide: Lincoln College, n.d.).

¹⁹ C.A. Jenkins, *Centenary of Methodism in Western Australia* (Perth: Methodist Book Depot, 1930), esp. 46–8; Smith, 'Transplanting Tradition', 40–41; J.H. Smith, 'A Brief History of Theological Education in Western Australia', in *Furtherance of Religious Beliefs*, ed. Treloar, 50.

²⁰ See esp. W.W. and S. Emilsen, 'The North,' in *The Uniting Church in Australia: The First 25 Years*, ed. W.W. and S. Emilsen (Melbourne: Circa, 2003), 67–9.

‘exporting’ the model of the dual-purpose college and its advantages to other states.²¹ It was hardly insignificant that its first Master Edward H. Sugden produced a standard edition of Wesley’s *Standard Sermons*.²² By 1902, when the various offshoots joined to form the Methodist Church of Australasia, little distinguished Methodism theologically but the use of Wesley’s *Notes upon the New Testament* (1754) and his four volumes of *Sermons* (1796–99) as a doctrinal standard.²³ Even before the famous 1932 Deed of Union in Great Britain, however, it was obvious that the Methodists were Protestants, subscribing to ‘the historic creeds’ of the Christian Church and upholding an ‘Evangelical faith’ that took the Bible as divine revelation but with liberty of individual interpretation, accepting justification by faith and not works, and stressing personal reliance on and relationship with Christ. The theology of Jacob Arminius on free and responsible decision to receive salvation was preferred to the Calvinist insistence on divine election ‘before the foundation of the world’.²⁴ In Australia, the Wesleyan Methodist camp was dominant and Whitefield-style predestinarianism barely existent, so that the call to freewill repentance, acceptance of the Gospel and embracing of ‘the holy life,’ albeit under the ‘necessity of Divine Grace,’ was preponderant.²⁵ As Australia’s first great theological educator, Sugden fitted the bill of this ‘practical Arminianism,’ as it has been dubbed, but very individually and with extraordinary erudition. His leaning was more humanist than most Methodist leaders, and if much of the distinctiveness about Wesley’s doctrine of sanctification got snatched away in the holiness movement, Sugden was very urbane in saintliness, eagerly served the Defence Department in wartime, joined the Masons, and, above

²¹ Since Queen’s is covered in detail in the previous issue of this journal it will not be considered in detail here. Readers are referred again to N. Young, ‘Ministerial Education in the Victoria and Tasmania Conference, 1874–1977,’ *Aldersgate Papers* 10 (September 2012): 95–110.

²² For Sugden’s critical edition and reading of Wesley’s *Sermons* see G. O’Brien, ‘Reading Wesley’s *Sermons* in Edwardian Melbourne,’ in *The Master*, ed. R. Howe, pp. 109–24.

²³ J. Wesley, *Explanatory Notes upon the New Testament* (London: William Boyer); *Sermons on Several Occasions* (London: Epworth Press, various eds.)

²⁴ Ephesians 1:4.

²⁵ H. Watkin-Jones, *Methodist Churchmanship and Its Implications* (London: Epworth, 1946), 12–14. But see N. Gunson, ‘The Contribution of the Calvinistic Methodist Movement to the Church History of Australia,’ *Church Heritage* 4: 1 (1985): 28–59.

all, shone out among university academics. He naturally had his detractors.²⁶

At Queen's, the Rev Edward Albiston became Professor of Theology and Principal of the Theological Hall in 1921 in order to ease the burden on the Master. With King's in Queensland the same separation of offices sadly came very late (1967), while with Kingswood in the West it applied straightaway; though in King's, any professorial appointment was exceptional, and at Kingswood absent. A main reason King's was built was to accommodate those training for ministry and to facilitate access to university courses.²⁷ In New South Wales and South Australia, by comparison, Leigh and Wesley Colleges and their study arrangements have always been under church-appointed principals and tutors, with involvement in the university system worked out through negotiations with and alongside other churches. For most of the twentieth century Methodist collaboration with Presbyterians and Congregationalists was strong. In Sydney, for instance, the Joint (later United) Faculty of Theology (UFT), centred at Harper House on St Andrew's College grounds at the University of Sydney, included Leigh College students from its inception in 1918. That meant a deal of travel (that did not apply to Queen's), even for the staff who had to participate in the combined Theological Hall, and even for those students not also undertaking university degrees, because all candidates, exclusively male until the sixties, domiciled at Enfield and traditionally forbidden to marry until after ordination, had to take transport to the campus.²⁸ By contrast, Adelaide's Wesley Theological College at first kept training and student movement within Methodist fences until 1930, and even then collaborated only with the Congregationalists for the next decade.²⁹

²⁶ B. Semmel, *The Methodist Revolution* (London: Heinemann, 1974), ch. 6 (quotation). Access to Arminius' writings by English speakers was strikingly limited; cf. Arminius, *Works*, trans. J. and W. Nichols (London: Thomas Baker, 1825–75), 3 vols. See also R. and B. Howe, 'E.H. Sugden and Civic Liberalism in Melbourne,' in *The Master*, ed. R. Howe, ch. 7; Breward, *A History of the Australian Churches*, 84.

²⁷ Faragher, *Men and Masters*, 2, 4, 13, 65, 69, 192; OT: Leigh Cook, founding Master, Kingswood, July 1969.

²⁸ Leigh College, Minutes, re: Joint Faculty, 1919–50 (UCA Archives, Synod of NSW and the ACT: Audrey Somerville Research Papers), Box 70178; cf. G. Barnes, *Doing Theology in Sydney: A History of United Theological College* (Adelaide: Openbook, 2000), 16. One student in the 1950s, Robert Leahr, was renowned for jogging between college and hall. (OT: Ruth Dicker, 5 April 2013).

²⁹ See Hunt, ed., *Number 20*, 32; cf. 52–3 for later collaborations.

Three recurring themes in Methodist theological education deserve some attention here: curriculum, standards, funding and ecumenical co-operation in the teaching process.³⁰

III. Curriculum

In Methodist programmes in all the states, the pattern of leading subjects was the same as at Queen's College: Old and New Testaments, Church History, Systematic Theology, Greek, and some Hebrew with additional courses in pastoral care. In most cases study was *in situ*. For Leigh College students in Sydney, however, most teaching took place at the United Faculty of Theology (UFT) Theological Hall at the university. As cooperative classes with Presbyterians and Congregationalists settled, two terms over three years of study involved travel to the university campus, but each third term was spent at Leigh itself, to concentrate on Methodist theology and laws, and on pastoral care.³¹ Candidates who were doing degrees (such as the BD) through Methodist establishments, rather than just a licentiate, would choose extra relevant subjects from a university Arts programme, their subject loads being heavier and travel schedules different. Across the country well into the 1980s the favoured way of securing BD (Hons) was through the Melbourne College of Divinity (MCD); and in Sydney a renowned supplement for ministers from all denominations was the coursework in social sciences named the Diploma in Sociology (in the Anthropology Department, under the Rev. Prof. Adolphus Elkin).³²

IV. Educational Level of Candidates

In the post-war years those offering as candidates for ministry had first to be fully accredited Local Preachers. If then recommended by the local circuit, they were subsequently examined, both at Synod

³⁰ Again, detail on Queen's College is omitted and the reader is referred to the earlier article referred to in footnote 21.

³¹ King's College Archives, Box. memorab; OT: R.G. Peterson, 2 April 2013 for Leigh.

³² P. Beirne, 'The Melbourne College of Divinity: A Selective Historical Overview', *Pacifica* 23 (2010): 127–36; C. Turney, U. Bygott and P. Chippendale, *Australia's First: A History of the University of Sydney, vol. 1: 1850–1939* (Sydney: University of Sydney, 1995), 518–20.

and Conference level, in Theology, Biblical Studies and Church History, and their capacity to lead worship and to preach was also assessed. When the results were to hand, acceptance came by a vote of all ministers at the Ministerial session of the Annual Conference.³³ In the late 1950s handy introductory textbooks to help were produced by London's Epworth Press, particularly Greville Lewis's edited *Approach to Christian Doctrine* (1957), in which a small host of British Methodist theologians clearly set Wesley's positions in the contexts of Patristic, mediaeval-scholastic and modern Protestant reflection.³⁴ The level of educational standards of Methodist ministers had been steadily rising, organisational procedures were tighter and preachers' knowledge of their own tradition generally sharper.

A common problem concerned differences in attitudes and aptitudes between those doing university degrees and those not. In Adelaide, with training set apart from the university, few did degrees, a large minority were happy with the Diploma course (DipDiv from MCD) extending over three years, and most did not make even that, but simply completed six years' 'training' and still became ministers in the end.³⁵ At King's in Brisbane, poignantly, between 1913 and 1934 only 30 out of 75 theological students took out their licentiates, but this was because the MCD LTh was only accessed from 1928, and from thereon anxieties over an under-educated, non-matriculated clergy eased.³⁶ In Sydney between the wars, most students faced a sharp contrast between the evangelical and often unquestioning tone in Leigh itself and the critical atmosphere in the Hall, where Presbyterian Professor Samuel Angus was causing a stir. Gordon Dicker, who on taking a university degree was developing early into a fine theologian, remembers being

³³ Young, *Queen's College and its Theologs: Reflecting Church and Society*. Sir Halford Cook Lecture, 4, for Queen's College Friends of the Library Occasional Paper, 8 (Melbourne: Queen's College, 1999), 7-8.

³⁴ H. Cleaver, *An Approach to the Old Testament*; G.P. Lewis, *An Approach to the New Testament*; Lewis, ed., *An Approach to Christian Doctrine* (London: Epworth Press, 1954-55).

³⁵ [Rev.] C[harles R.] Bigg, 'Wesley (Theological) College, Adelaide', (unpublished memo., April, 2013), 1-2; but for later developments, Bigg, *An Ecumenical Adventure: A History of the Adelaide College of Divinity, 1979-2009* (Adelaide: Adelaide College of Divinity and Historical Society of the Uniting Church in South Australia, 2009).

³⁶ H.H. Trigge's reflections reported in *Queensland Methodist Times* (27 Sept. 1934); I. Gillman, 'Theological Education in Queensland: A History', *Colloquium* 37:1 (2005): 71.

frustrated in the early 1950s that for most Leigh collegians their self-expressed 'call by the Holy Spirit' did not go along with real diligence at study. Even by 1963, of the fifty men at Leigh only sixteen were engaged in university courses (six by that time at the University of New South Wales, founded 1949), and there was fear that narrow, 'previously held opinions' had not been dislodged by the useful 'earthquake' of university experience. But there was a detectable realisation that the expected levels of education of trainees were rising and were ready for more improvement.³⁷ As Leigh's Assistant Principal during the 1960s, Allan Loy spent time dispelling the illusion that a circuit minister should not be a theologian, reminding students that for John Wesley 'only the man who thinks theologically can preach with passion'.³⁸ But across the country, in Perth, laments grew louder over the unsatisfactory and uninviting nature of the Methodist training for ministers – only three people candidating per annum from 1946 to 1957, with a worrying 'amount of difference' in their intellect, and a residential college wanting for so long.³⁹

V. Funding

In Victoria and Tasmania, the Conference agreed to impose a levy on all circuits to fund theological education which made funding more secure. Elsewhere, state Conferences mostly budgeted for free theological training and board, although in Queensland there was an expectation that candidates pay their own way as much as they could. If in Sydney Leigh students also needed an allowance to travel between Enfield and the Theological Hall, the lion's share of fund-raising drives for theological students had to do with the erection, expansion and improvements of the college from the 1920s to 70s. As costs increased, of course, the later that Methodist building projects were left the greater the expenses entailed, as in the cases of the move of King's to the new university campus at St Lucia in 1954 (the then Master Hubert Trigge travelling around Queensland to raise AU £54,000) and the building of Kingswood College (funded

³⁷ OTs: Mrs Winifred Walker interview by B. Howe, 2004; Ruth and Gordon Dicker, 2 and 5 April 2013; L. Cliff, 'Theologs in a University,' *Vocatus* (1963): 13 (quotations); Anonymous pamphlet calling for ministers inside *Vocatus* (1963): 18–19.

³⁸ Loy, 'Theological Training,' *Vocatus* (1963): 10–11.

³⁹ S. Croker, 'The Church in Western Australia,' *Vocatus* (1958): 27.

with £100,000).⁴⁰ Special financial burdens along the way included travel and board costs for the relevant state Conferences sending candidates to study at Queen's, or at Leigh in Sydney keeping up the responsibility inherited from the tradition of hosting some students from Tonga and Papua New Guinea.⁴¹

VI. Ecumenical Cooperation

By the 1950s, Congregationalist, Methodist and Presbyterian students increasingly studied together, and from the mid-60s all Queen's and Ormond College theological students were combined. With the formation of the United Faculty of Theology (UFT) in 1970, educating Catholic and Protestant students together, Melbourne became Australia's pre-eminent centre for theological studies.⁴²

Elsewhere, the ecumenical story was different, although growing student access to the MCD from other states shows the national importance of the Victorian developments. But in Sydney, of course, the Methodists' cooperation in the Theological Hall went back to 1918, and Leigh staff (normally only two or three persons anyway) were expected to give lecture courses. Access to a (postgraduate) university degree of BD was there to be had for students of any affiliation by 1936, because the University of Sydney established a Board of Studies in Divinity to administer it (the University of Queensland thereafter deploying Arts Faculty departments to achieve the same result, and adding a Diploma of Divinity).⁴³ In Adelaide the Methodists and Congregationalists shared teachers in their courses from 1930, and in 1968 they merged their institutions into Parkin-Wesley College; whereas with Kingswood in the west,

⁴⁰ See esp. Leigh College, Minutes, re: Building Fund 1919–28 (UCA Archives, Synod of NSW and the ACT: Audrey Somerville Research Papers), Box 70178; Corresp. Overall Development, 1945–75 (UCA Archives), Box 70171; Faragher, *Men and Masters*, pp. 53–6, 67–8; Croker, 'The Church in Western Australia,' 28.

⁴¹ See, for example, S. Gaius, 'The Ministry in New Britain,' *Vocatus* (1958): 8.

⁴² For some of this story, see C. Sherlock, *Uncovering Theology: The Depth, Reach and Utility of Australian Theological Education* (Adelaide: ATF, 2009), 26–8.

⁴³ Barnes, *Doing Theology*, 13–14 (Sydney also administering an MTh in the late 1970s; OT: R.W. Hartley, 28 April 2013); Gillman, 'Theological Education in Queensland', 71, 74; M. Franzmann, 'Australia, New Zealand, and the Pacific Islands', in *Religious Studies: A Global View*, ed. G. Alles (New York: Routledge, 2008), 221. Queensland mainline Protestants moved towards a United Faculty of Theology in 1934, and joined with the Catholics to form Trinity Theological College in 1983, after the Uniting Church was formed.

its educational programme was merging with the Presbyterians' at St Columba College before union in 1977.⁴⁴

For Methodist theologians, the opportunity to confer across Australasia and with thinkers from other traditions increased exponentially with the annual conferences of the Australian and New Zealand Association of Theological Schools (from 1968), which, especially through the journal *Colloquium*, exposed the common interests and methods of those who forged the ecumenical training arrangements known today.⁴⁵

VII. Post-War Developments

Of Methodism's theological colleges, Queen's and King's were the only ones old enough to feel the effects of the Great War seriously,⁴⁶ and World War Two had less drastic effects on ministerial training, though some candidates 'heard the bugles of England' and did enlist.⁴⁷ Shortages of ministers resulted, yet one incidental benefit at Queen's was that select married candidates – ex-servicemen – were permitted to reside at Queen's during the week and study in the Theological Hall.⁴⁸ Methodism's Anglophile connections made its adherents typically respectful of the ANZAC tradition, although as one Leigh student put it at the characteristic annual Commemoration Service in 1950, if 'it takes war to call out the finest qualities of the human spirit,' the Kingdom of God has none of war's 'barbarity and horror', and urges rather a new 'patriotism' within an 'international brotherhood of nations'.⁴⁹ Some famous Methodist pacifists (such as wartime President-General John Burton and

⁴⁴ Hunt, ed., *Number 20* (the college joining the degree-conferring Adelaide College of Divinity in 1979, after the Uniting Church was formed); Smith, 'Transplanting Tradition,' chs 4–5. (By 1999 Kingswood and St Columba's were administered jointly as Trinity).

⁴⁵ G.L. Barnes, *ANZATS: The First 35 Years* (Sydney: Sydney College of Divinity, 2007).

⁴⁶ For the response of the Victorian and Tasmanian Conference to the Great War see G. O'Brien, "'The Empire's Titanic Struggle': Victorian Methodism and the Great War,' *Aldersgate Papers* 10 (September 2012): 50–66.

⁴⁷ Methodist Church of Australasia, *Minutes of the Victorian and Tasmanian Conference*, 1941 (for indicative quotation); Faragher, *Men and Masters*, esp. 9, 17–20.

⁴⁸ See Young, 'Ministerial Education in the Victorian/Tasmanian Conference,' 100–105.

⁴⁹ P.K. Davis, address in Leigh College Chapel, Anzac Day, 1950, in *Leigh* 1 (1950): 18.

emergent preacher Alan Walker) were having their effect;⁵⁰ and when the Cold War developed Leigh's Senior Student Gordon Dicker warned against the smug conclusion that 'the Western world would survive', or that the Church think itself on the side of military victors. Eventually theologians would be marching against Australia's involvement in questionable wars, the Rev. Dr Robert Maddox of Kingswood, for one, memorably out in front through Perth's central business district in 1970.⁵¹

The visiting 1941 Cato lecturer, Dr Lynn Harold Hough, Dean of Divinity from Drew University (New Jersey), offered to make an annual tuition scholarship at Drew available to a graduating Methodist.⁵² Colin Williams was the first to benefit from this (Drew BD, 1947–50 and PhD, 1954–58), followed by Norman Young (Drew BD and PhD, 1954–59). Williams and Young returned to Queen's, famously acquitting themselves as Professors of Theology (1947–50 and 1970–95 respectively), Young first cutting his teeth as a teacher at King's. In Queensland he was Deputy Master to Ian Grimmett, the sequence of whose degrees best illustrate what was happening: BD (MCD), MA (UQld), followed by masters and doctoral degrees in Systematic Theology from Union Theological Seminary (Columbia University, New York). Leading lights in the development of Sydney's Leigh College, Enfield in Sydney, Allan Loy, Robert Maddox and Gordon Dicker, also gained American doctorates (Yale, Harvard, Union), and American Methodist university opportunities diversified after 1948.⁵³ The return of these 'high-flyers' to lecture as theological educators paved the way for many more, to various American and British universities.⁵⁴

⁵⁰ A.W. Thornley, 'John Wear Burton (1875–1970)', *ADB* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1979), 7: 497–8; Don Wright, *Alan Walker: Conscience of the Nation* (Adelaide: Openbook, 1997), 34.

⁵¹ Dicker, 'Election and the Church', *Leigh* vol. 3 (1952): pp. 15–17; G. Trompf, personal experience, Perth, 1970.

⁵² The title of his lecture, and its later expanded published version was *Adventures in Understanding* (Sydney: Angus & Robertson, 1941). As was customary at the time for Cato Lecturers, Hough also gave addresses in other centres in Australia.

⁵³ See Methodist Church Division of Educational Institutions, *A Survey of Ten Theological Schools Affiliated with the Methodist Church* (Nashville: [Methodist Church, United States], 1948).

⁵⁴ N. Young, *Queen's College and its Theologs*, 9–11; Faragher, *Men and Masters*, 67–72, 93–94. See also I. Grimmett, Pref. to 'The Master Bids Farewell', *Kingsman* (1985): 6; C. Williams, R. Maddox, A.W. Loy, et al., *Religious Studies in a Modern University: Public Lectures given by the School of Divinity* (Sydney: [University of Sydney], 1976).

In 1963 Leigh's Principal recognised that his college had enjoyed a five per cent rise of candidatures over the previous four years, there being 186 theological students in Australia in 1963, 42 more than in 1960. The establishing of the BD at the Universities of Sydney and Queensland also made very high credentials available.⁵⁵ Yet just when the hopes of the former years appeared realisable, ironically, extraordinary problems arose. Unpredicted social upheavals led to radical challenges against many traditional views, with anti-authoritarian attitudes producing new visions of alternative living, early feminism, and opposition to Australia's involvement in the Vietnam War.⁵⁶ Very soon the traditionally conceived 'nature and relevance of the ordained ministry', and 'the place of local congregations in relation to the Church's mission', came under severe scrutiny.⁵⁷

What was worse, novel theological arguments for 'secularisation' took God's gift of freedom to humankind to include human independence and a 'coming of age', with the Creator cutting loose his parental ties and thus religious restraints. In a consequent unsettling of many younger ministers, wholesale resignations followed, and about half the ordinands in the Victorian and Tasmanian Conference were lost during 1967–69, coinciding with a marked decline in church membership among the under-forties. With such adverse developments it was natural for the General Conference to ask (by 1967) where the age-old 'idea of sacrifice' had gone for those preparing to be men of God, and financial help was soon only offered for theological training not for time doing university degrees.⁵⁸ Through transformative times, teachers were adjusting as best they could to adapt to 'changing patterns,' encouraging 'specialist skills' in candidates to prepare them for 'expressing their faith in tangible ways' in factories, hospitals and other institutions.⁵⁹ Meanwhile in the more traditional West the crisis was not really felt until well into the 1970s, and there at Kingswood, just prior to union, college life reproduced much of what

⁵⁵ S.R. Bowyer-Hayward, 'The Principal Speaks of Missing Persons', *Vocatus* (1963): 4–5; Faragher, *Men and Masters*, 13 (30 King's theologs in 1960).

⁵⁶ Young, 'Ministerial Education,' 105–06.

⁵⁷ Quoting Australasian Wesleyan Methodist Church, *Minutes of the Victorian and Tasmanian Conference*, 1966.

⁵⁸ Australasian Wesleyan Methodist Church, *Minutes of the Victorian and Tasmanian Conference*, 1967.

⁵⁹ Quite early in this issue was R.G. Peterson, 'Changing Patterns in the Christian Ministry', *Vocatus* (1963): pp. 22–33.

used to apply in Queen's back in Victoria, where the previously impressive College/Hall paradigm of theological education was finishing its course.

The General Conference of 1966 determined that women should be accepted as candidates for the ordained ministry. The Victorian and Tasmanian Conference was quick to receive its first women candidates, and although they could not reside in the college until 1973, they trained within the Hall at Queen's. It made up for the common gripe that deaconesses, many of whom conducted services, had a longstanding role in Methodist life yet were barely trained in theology. For years the pleas of New South Wales outback deaconess Shirley Dunbar to be so trained went unheeded, a tragedy for which a formal apology eventually had to be issued in 2005.⁶⁰ Outside Victoria, however, women candidates before 1977 were very few, Methodists being not so inclined to encourage female ministers (when compared, say, to the Congregationalists). In New South Wales there were only two ordained female ministers by that year, although out of 38 theological students six were women.⁶¹ Significant female leaders under the new system, though, were only to achieve high office after union – Shirley Maddox (1994) and layperson Margaret Reeson (2000–2002), for examples, as state Moderators. A by now famous Methodist woman leader, Tasmanian the Rev Dorothy [McRae-]McMahon (1934–), was working administratively for the National and World Councils of Churches while beginning candidature with the Methodists in 1976 (but being ordained as a Uniting Church minister in 1982).⁶²

VIII. Methodist Theologians

Australian Methodist theological educators left their stamp over the years, although most seemed too restrained by pressures of institutional duty and feelings of isolation to make their mark in

⁶⁰ 'Uniting Church Rights an Old Sexist Wrong', *Impact* (Sydney) (Easter 2006): 12 (on the Dunbar case); cf. Breward, *History of the Churches*, 210, 214 (on the larger issue).

⁶¹ R.W. Hartley, comp., 'The Ministerial Index: Methodist Appointments in New South Wales', *Journal and Proceedings of the Australasian Methodist Historical Society* 97 (1977): 1,453–1,524, esp. 1,523–4.

⁶² OT: esp. Rev. Elizabeth Walker, 24 April 2013; and see D. McRae-McMahon, *Memoirs of Moving On: A Life of Faith, Passion, and Resilience* (Sydney: Jane Curry, 2004).

publishing.⁶³ Here we will focus on those who are well-known figures in the history of Australian Christian intellectual life.⁶⁴ We will only consider figures whose major work belongs to the first three-quarters of the twentieth century, leading up to the formation of the Uniting Church.

In Australian Methodism high-level theologising was fitful but not uninteresting. Queen's first theological professor, Edward Albiston (1866–1961), was obviously a brilliant and inspiring teacher. Perhaps the Great War seemed to turn him into a kind of 'Methodist Quaker', restraining his writer's hand, but he doughtily defended a critical approach to Bible exposition (memorably foiling arch-conservative W.H. Fitchett, who opposed using Peake's Commentary); and his interest in personal spirituality and less institutionalised church life heralded the arrival of the college's well-known 'mystical Master', Dr Raynor Johnson.⁶⁵ At King's the first Master, Oxford-trained the Rev M. Scott Fletcher (1868–1947), son of Joseph Fletcher of Sydney's Stanmore Institution, produced his remarkable *Psychology of the New Testament* (1912), positing inter alia that there were no better means of keeping one's sanity than by following Christ's teachings. Fletcher went on to help an Australian readership to understand apocalypticism in its ancient context, and was active as a teacher about intellectual history for the Workers' Educational Association.⁶⁶ The writings of King's second Master, Leslie E. Bennett (1882–1969) nicely complemented part of his predecessor's opus, his impressive *Realm of God* (1920) deftly retrieving Christian hope in a finally fulfilled Kingdom of God from higher critics' dismissals and chiliasts' over-enthusiasm. Pursuing a distinctly Methodist middle way, he welcomed the best of human

⁶³ Such a figure as Leigh's Principal Bowyer-Hayward, as a special case, spent years teaching NT Greek, never expecting on the basis of his Cambridge MA to add anything to language study. King's Rev. Prof. Trigge (1889–1965) was overwhelmed with administration, fundraising and teaching, even though he was appointed Professor of Biblical Exegesis in the Hall (1955) and was later a founder of the university Board of Studies in Divinity.

⁶⁴ For Methodist scholars who contributed beyond the discipline of theology see Garry W. Trompf, 'Australian Methodist Scholars,' in *Australian Methodism: A History*, ed. Glen O'Brien and Hilary Carey (Farnham: Ashgate, 2015), 225–41.

⁶⁵ E.F. Osborn, 'Albiston, Arthur Edward (1866–1961),' *ADB* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1979), 7: 28–9; Breward, *History of the Australian Churches*, 120–21. (Note Albiston being President-General in 1938).

⁶⁶ M. S. Fletcher, *The Psychology of the New Testament* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1912); *Hellenism and Judaism as Reflected in the Apocalyptic Movement during the Maccabaeon Period* (Sydney: Penfold, 1926); *The Evolution of Modern Thought: 21 Lectures* (Brisbane: WEA, 1924).

progress while upholding the Bible's 'ringing message' that the last 'triumph' is God's.⁶⁷ If Fletcher was a Sydney 'export,' Bennett was a Tasmanian and a product of opportunities offered from Melbourne (including the London BD); and another Tasmanian, the Rev Dr W. Frank Hambly (1908–72), one of Sugden's last students and 'emissaries', became the first Master of Adelaide's Lincoln College (1952–65), his long researches into John's Gospel, though curtailed by administrative duties, eventually bearing fruit.⁶⁸

Easily the most influential Methodist theological educator mid-century was Bendigo-born the Rev. Prof. Calvert Barber (1893–1967), succeeding Albiston at Queen's. Wise and long-serving (1937–59), and nurturing Williams and Young who followed him, Barber addressed the multi-religious context and the new intellectual and social challenges of post-war Australia. He completed his London doctorate on beliefs about sin in the great religions, and his wartime stretcher-bearing experience made him terribly aware of evil. Even though he began with an interest in natural theology he later faced Barthian suspicions toward all kinds of naturalism in full swing. Still, benefiting from attending the 1936 World Congress of Faiths (London), Barber bequeathed one of the earliest Australian exercises in Comparative Religion, and was in a good position to undertake some of the most penetrating criticisms of evolutionary social theory (and its racist implications) in his lecturing.⁶⁹ Moreover, when animal pathologist Harold A. Woodruff (and by then prominent layman) promoted a Methodist Social Justice Committee and a pamphlet series to go with it, Barber was quick to prepare readers to see an end of war and to learn the lessons of history – that every

⁶⁷ Perhaps the first known extensive study of the Kingdom of God preferring the usage 'Realm': L.E. Bennett, *The Realm of God* (New York: G.H. Doran, 1920); cf. *The Queenslander*, 19 Jan. 1924: 3.

⁶⁸ Bennett, who became President of the NSW Conference, was the son of a President of the Victorian and Tasmanian Conference: *Sydney Morning Herald*, 23 Feb. 1933: 13. And see Hambly, 'The Doctrine of the Church in the Fourth Gospel', unpublished Bevan Memorial Lecture (Adelaide: Parkin College, 1954); 'The Church in the Fourth Gospel', PhD diss., MCD, Melbourne, 1963; 'Creation and Gospel: A Brief Comparison of Genesis 1:1–2:4 and John 1:1–2:12', *Studia Evangelica*, 5, ed. F.L. Cross, *Texte und Untersuchungen* 103 (Berlin: Akademie, 1968), 69–74. Cf. I. Forbes (with A.P. Moore), *A History of Lincoln College* (Adelaide: Openbook, 2007), 24–9.

⁶⁹ C. Barber, 'The Concept of Sin in the Great Religions of the East,' PhD diss., University of London, London, 1938; "'The Social Organism' Theory and its Bearing on Sociological Theory", unpublished lectures, Uniting Church Archives, Esternwick, Vic; Calvert Barber, Box 2; B. Barber, 'Calvert Barber (1893–1967): Methodist, Apologist, Ecumenist', *UCA Historical Society* 9: 2 (2002): 4–7.

civilisation 'began in promise, rose to its climax, and fell on ruins because it failed to learn the lessons of righteousness'.⁷⁰

In reconsidering the bases of the faith, Methodist theologians were addressing massive changes in the history of Western consciousness. In Barber's wake, Gippsland-raised the Rev. Prof. Colin Williams (1921–2000) gained quick renown for filling an obvious gap with his book on the relevance of Wesley for contemporary times. While his Queensland counterpart Ian Grimmett had been more interested in influences upon Wesley historically, Williams asked what claims the Methodist founder had to address new challenges of the times.⁷¹ His very intelligent attention to secularisation (as a Christian humanist) and to key social issues (such as racial and religious conflict), made him a good choice for the Deanship of America's great Divinity School at Yale (1969–79).⁷² Concentrating here on his role in Australia, Williams' lecturing adapted Barber's interests in the direction of modern thought from the nineteenth century, improving on it as a proud product of the 'Melbourne history school'. But he focused on the pressing question of authority and the competing claims of revelation, reason (and science) and recorded history, defending 'the Lordship of Christ' in bringing finality to cosmic meaning.⁷³ A worthy choice to be Australia's Methodist delegate at the Second Assembly of the World Council of Churches in Evanston, Illinois (1954), he served again in New Delhi (1961) and Uppsala (1969).⁷⁴

⁷⁰ C. Barber, *The Sovereignty of God* (Melbourne: Methodist Commission on Reconstruction, 1943); A.H. Wood, *'Not Lost but Gone Before': Memories of 100 Christian Men and Women* (Melbourne: Meerit Publications, 1987), 190.

⁷¹ I. Grimmett, 'The Influence of English Thought of the Eighteenth Century on the Life and Teachings of the Reverend John Wesley, etc.', MA diss., University of Queensland, Brisbane, 1947; C. Williams, *John Wesley's Theology Today: A Study of the Wesleyan Tradition in the Light of Current Theological Dialogue* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1961), yet note Williams' interest in historical questions, as in the App., 207–42.

⁷² See, for instance, C.W. Williams, *What in the World?* (New York: National Council of the Churches of Christ, 1964); *Faith in a Secular Age* (London: Fontana, 1966); *Black and White Together: The Race Struggle in the U.S.A.* (Sydney: Angus & Robertson, 1973); 'Jerusalem: A Universal Cultural and Historical Resource' (Paper prepared for Aspen Institute of Humanistic Studies), Palo Alto, Ca., 1975.

⁷³ Williams, 'Unpublished Lecture Notes, etc.', ([collat. by] G.F. Fairhall et al.) (Melbourne: Executive of the Theological Students Society for Queen's College, 1963) (mimeograph, Sugden Collection, Queen's College), pts. 1–3, esp. 2, and 163–75.

⁷⁴ For this and more I rely on B. Howe, 'Colin Williams', unpublished paper delivered to the [second] workshop on 'Methodism in Australia', Queen's College, University of Melbourne, 9 Dec. 2011.

Williams' one-time colleague at Queen's, Cambridge-trained the Rev. Prof. Eric Osborn (1922–2007), whose pomposity irksomely challenged Williams' own formidable persona, achieved renown for his 1957 study of Clement of Alexandria, who was brilliantly engaged philosophically in the polyphony of Hellenistic religious life. Osborn emerged as the veritable Southern Hemispheric doyen of Patristic Studies during the 1970s, and even kept slightly ahead of his teacher (later Sir) Henry Chadwick's output, pounding out five other leading books on the pre-Nicene Fathers and attaining an Emeritus Professorship at La Trobe University.⁷⁵ While a strong ecumenist, Osborn never forgot Methodist interests,⁷⁶ but his attainments and output were unprecedented.

Protagonists for Australasian Methodist Mission concerns and/or experience sat high in the teaching ranks. The most productive of Adelaide's Principals at Wesley College, namely Arthur Blacket (1901–72), wrote sensitively on Fiji's Indian Christians, though again it was another Queen's academic, L. Douglas Fullerton (1918–2008), who shone more brightly as a teaching missiologist. Authoritative on the history of Fijian church-state relations, he secured UFT's professorship of Christian Ethics (1977–83) because of his cross-cultural experience, even in medical issues.⁷⁷ After Leigh had been run in the 1960s by Winston O'Reilly, the last great (but little published) 'mine of information' on Methodist affairs, the arrival of Robert Maddox (1931–82) as college Principal, presented a very special phenomenon outside the prestigious Victorian sphere.

⁷⁵ E. Osborn, *The Philosophy of Clement of Alexandria* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1957); *Justin Martyr* (Tübingen, J.C. Mohr, 1973); *Ethical Patterns in Early Christian Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976); *The Beginning of Christian Philosophy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981); *The Emergence of Christian Theology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993); *Tertullian: First Theologian of the West* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997); *Irenaeus of Lyons* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001); D. T. Runia, 'Eric Francis Osborn: A Tribute', *Vigiliae Christianae* 58 (2004): pp. 242–55.

⁷⁶ E. Osborn, *Church Union Now* (Melbourne: Methodist Publishing House, 1964); *The Faith of the Gospel* (Melbourne: Methodist Publishing House, 1964); *Word and History: Three Lectures in New Testament Themes*, Lectures in Biblical Studies 1 (Perth: University of Western Australia, 1967).

⁷⁷ A.H. Blacket, *The Growth of the Indian Church in Fiji within the Mission of the Methodist Church of Australasia* ([Adelaide]: Wesley College, SA, 1960); obit., Methodist Church of Australasia, *Minutes of the South Australia Conference*, 1972; L.D. Fullerton, 'From Christendom to Pluralism in the South Seas: Church-State Relations in the Twentieth Century', PhD diss., Drew University, Madison, 1969; for analysis, see J.E. Bush, 'Claiming a Christian State Where None Exists: Church and State in the Republic of Fiji', *Pacifica* 12 (1995): 57, 63–4. Cf. Fullerton Obit.: Victorian Institute for Forensic Medicine, Annual Report (2007–2008): 13.

Maddox emerged as one of Australia's finest New Testament scholars, considering *The Purpose of Luke-Acts* (1982) and his stint as a Humboldt Fellow working with Ferdinand Hahn in Munich.⁷⁸ An experienced theological educator (moving from Kingswood), Maddox was a key Methodist visionary, along with his colleague the Rev Dr Allan Loy (1920–2005), behind the United Faculty of Theology at Sydney (now part of Charles Sturt University), though he died tragically before its complete actualisation at North Parramatta.⁷⁹ The involvement of Osborn and Maddox in the Australia New Zealand Association of Theological Studies (with its journal *Colloquium*), in the *Australian Biblical Studies Review* and in important *Prudentia* conferences can hardly be underestimated. Neither can the ecumenical involvement of Victorian Norman Young and New South Welshman Gordon Dicker.

Young (1930–), the first Australian Methodist to pen a positive work about a German higher-critical theologian, Rudolf Bultmann, was appointed foundation Professor in Melbourne's UFT (1969) and held various Visiting Professorships (including Yale, Drew, Princeton and Cambridge [UK]). He was Methodism's theological frontrunner in negotiations towards the Uniting Church, and was for twenty years a member of the World Methodist/Roman Catholic International Commission.⁸⁰ Dicker (1930–), for his part, being the first Methodist missionary to work with a non-Methodist church (in West Timor), offered advanced thinking about multi-cultural ministry and comparative Protestant theology for the emergent Uniting Church (heading Sydney's United Theological College, 1989–96).⁸¹ He long supported Maddox and his widow Shirley

⁷⁸ R. Maddox, *The Purpose of Luke-Acts* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1982); cf. his *Witnesses to the Ends of the Earth: The Pattern of Mission in the Book of Acts* (Melbourne: Joint Board of Christian Education, 1984); F. Hahn, *Historical Investigation and New Testament Faith: Two Essays*, trans. and ed. R. Maddox (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1983).

⁷⁹ Barnes, *Doing Theology in Sydney*, 26–31; G. Lilburne, 'Robert James Maddox (1931–1982): Australian Theologian', *Uniting Church Studies* 12: 1 (2006): 19–36.

⁸⁰ See especially, N. Young, *History and Existential Theology: The Role of History in the Thought of Rudolf Bultmann* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1969); *Introducing the Basis of Union* (Melbourne: Joint Board of Christian Education, 1971); *Creator, Creation, and Faith* (London: Collins, 1976). For a festschrift on Young, see S. Winter, ed. *Immense, Unfathomed, Unconfined: Essays on the Grace of God in Honour of Norman Young* (Melbourne: Uniting Academic Press, 2013).

⁸¹ G. Dicker, *Children of Timor* (Sydney: Sydney Methodist Church of Australasia, 1960); 'The Concept of "Simul Justus et Peccator" in Relation to the Thought of Luther, Wesley, and Bonhoeffer, and its Significance for a Doctrine of the Christian Life', PhD diss., Union Theological Seminary, New York, 1969; *Faith with*

(1929–) in bringing theological and expository issues to the people in the quarterly *With Love to the World* (1976–), and Dicker was game enough to defend in-vitro fertilisation in public debate, supported by his wife Ruth (1933–), who taught New Testament Greek in her own right.⁸² The theological leadership in Queensland had a less adventurous soul in Ian Grimmett (1915–99), a bastion of the older Methodist orientation.⁸³

Outside the Theological Halls, we find University of Sydney biologist Prof Charles Birch (1918–2009) making himself highly useful to the WCC as key theological defender of ‘the integrity of Creation’; and he became outspoken in his environmentalist concerns over Australia’s future. He joined American Methodist John R. Cobb, Jr to cultivate an international forum of ‘Ecological Theology’, and with coveted Templeton Prize money he set up a public lecture series on religion and science from 1991.⁸⁴ Birch had eventually pitched himself against Methodist orthodoxy and an interventionist God, often acerbically. As Vice-Master of Wesley College at the University of Sydney, and also active in the Methodist-founded Wayside Chapel, he claimed new scientific discoveries necessitated a ‘post-modern’ theological outlook, with the way open to engage in other religions with environmental sensitivities and compassion for all living things.⁸⁵ Facing the same challenges of

Understanding (Sydney: Unichurch, 1981). Dicker was a case study contributor to A.F. and R.A. Evans and D.A. Roozen, eds, *The Globalization of Theological Education* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1993).

⁸² OT: R. Dicker, Nov. 2012; April 2013; cf. also G. Dicker, ‘Kerygma and Australian Culture: The Case of the Aussie Battler’, in *Towards Theology in an Australian Context*, ed. V.C. Hayes (Adelaide: AASR, 1979), ch. [5]; Dicker, ‘Australia: Sacred Sites,’ in *Human Rights: A Dialogue between the First and Third Worlds*, eds R.A. and A.F. Evans (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1983), ch. 4.

⁸³ For indications, I. Grimmett, ‘A Trinitarian Approach to the Doctrine of the Kingdom of God’, PhD diss., Union Theological Seminary, New York, 1957; and I. Grimmett, ‘William Moore, 1821–1893’, in *ADB* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1974), 5: 280; cf. Ministerial Retirements and Memorials, Uniting Church Qld Synod, 1999, vol. 1, addendum.

⁸⁴ C. Birch, *Nature and God* (London: SCM, 1965); ‘Nature, Humanity and God in Ecological Perspective,’ in *Faith and Science in an Unjust World: Report of the World Council of Churches’ Conference on Faith, Science and the Future*, ed. R.L. Shinn, MIT, 1979 (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1980), 62–73.; C. Birch and J. B. Cobb, *The Liberation of Life* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981); C. Birch, W. Eakin and J.B. Daniel, eds, *Liberating Life: Contemporary Approaches to Ecological Theology* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1990), esp. chs 5, 13 and Cobb’s Afterword.

⁸⁵ R. Hughes, ‘Charles Birch: Full Interview Transcript’, accessed 5 November 2013, <http://www.australianbiography.gov.au/subjects/birch/intertext1.html>; Birch, ‘Eight

relativism and the weakening of institutional bonds, more distinctly Methodist pragmatists, such as American educated the Rev. Drs Geoffrey Peterson (1925–) and Denham Grierson (1935–), made valuable contributions as pastoral theologians.⁸⁶ Others such as Clifford Symons and Bruce Gentle played interesting if minor roles in pamphleteering Methodist theological outlooks to the pews.

IX. Widening Intellectual Horizons

Australian Methodist theological attention was traditionally very Anglophile, so brief reflection should be allowed to those helping to break this cultural barrier. In Sugden's day, how much did he benefit from the presence of layman Prof. Boyce Gibson (1869–1935), who helped service ordinands' classes in logic. As Professor of Philosophy, Gibson (along with his wife) was also the first to introduce German personal idealism and Husserlian phenomenology to Australia.⁸⁷ German tutor to the colleges, the Lutheran-turning-Methodist Otto Krome (1863–1917) brought knowledge of Goethe and Germanic high culture, his skills quickly recognised for Methodist schooling. While headmaster of Melbourne's Methodist Ladies College, however, neither the combined efforts of Sugden and Fitchett could save him from parents' and public opprobrium during the Great War for being a 'Kraut'.⁸⁸ Still, one senses the inception of theological pursuit among Methodist women with Krome's daughters (one being headmistress of two well-known girls' schools) and also with Sugden's daughter, his biographer.⁸⁹

Fallacies in the Modern World and Five Axioms for a Post-modern Worldview', *Perspectives in Science and Medicine* 32 (1988): 122–30; C. Birch, *On Purpose* (Sydney: UNSW Press, 1990); C. Birch, *Regaining Compassion for Humanity and Nature* (Sydney: UNSW Press, 1993).

⁸⁶ See, for example, G. Peterson, *Conscience and Caring* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1982); *Anger: Basic Questions from the Bible and Daily Living* (Sydney: Geoffrey Peterson, 2012); D. Grierson, *Uluru Journey: An Exploration into Narrative Theology* (Melbourne: Joint Board of Christian Education, 1996).

⁸⁷ See esp. B. Gibson (with A. Klein), *The Problem of Logic*, rev. ed. (1908; repr. London: A. & C. Black, 1930); Gibson, *God with Us: A Study in Religious Idealism* (London: A. & C. Black, 1909).

⁸⁸ For the story, see A.G.T. Zainu'ddin, *They Dreamt of a School: A Centenary History of Methodist Ladies College Kew, 1882–1982* (Melbourne: Hyland House, 1982), ch. 4, and esp. 118, 145

⁸⁹ See, for example, I. Southall, *The Story of The Hermitage: The First Fifty Years of the Geelong Church of England's Grammar School* (Melbourne: Cheshire, 1956);

In Sydney, the great Adolf Deissmann's student Presbyterian the Rev. Prof. Samuel Angus, a leading authority on the cultural atmosphere of New Testament times, generated great attention at the Theological Hall, much to many Methodists' consternation when he was widely accused of heretical opinions.⁹⁰ His successor the Rev. Prof. John McIntyre was much more acceptable, consistently relaying information about Continental (especially Swiss Protestant) theological developments to Methodist students; and philosopher of religion the Rev. Prof. Crawford Miller did the same regarding post-Kantian German thought.⁹¹ In Melbourne, in more recent times, the Indian-born son of a Conference President Ian Weeks (1938–), who became Head of Religious Studies at Deakin University, used his command of both Plato and Continental existentialism to support Methodist theological thinkers, including Bruce Barber (1937–), Calvert's son, who became Dean of UFT, Melbourne.⁹²

The story of Methodist theological endeavour is one of steady educational betterment and public influence, as Methodist leaders worked through their own tradition's inherent ecumenical possibilities towards the remarkable unity achieved in the Uniting Church in Australia.

M.F. Sugden, *Edward H. Sugden: A Pen Portrait of the First Master of Queen's College, University of Melbourne* (Melbourne: Lothian, 1941).

⁹⁰ S. Emilsen, *A Whiff of Heresy: Samuel Angus and the Presbyterian Church in New South Wales* (Sydney: UNSW Press, 1991), esp. p. 173.

⁹¹ See, for example, McIntyre, 'Theological Existence Today', *Leigh* vol. 2 (1951): pp. 20–21; R. Campbell, 'The Philosophical Environment for Theologising in Australia', in *Australian and New Zealand Religious History 1788–1988*, ed. R. Withycombe (Canberra: ANZSTS, 1988), pp. 33–43.

⁹² For example, I. Weeks, with D. Reid, eds, *A Thoughtful Life: Essays in Philosophical Theology*, H. Wardlaw Festschrift (Adelaide: AFT, 2006), esp. ch. 14; cf. B.L. Barber and D. Neville, eds, *Theodicy and Eschatology* (Adelaide: AFT, 2005).